

In 2019, Bosnia and Herzegovina made a moderate advancement in efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor. The Council of Ministers adopted the 2020–2023 National Strategy to Combat Trafficking in Persons and improved victim access to social services by merging resources for domestic and foreign victims of human trafficking into one fund. The government also launched a project with the Council of Europe to prevent and combat human trafficking. However, children in Bosnia and Herzegovina engage in the worst forms of child labor, including in forced begging, sometimes as a result of human trafficking. The Anti-Trafficking Strike Force lacks coordination between prosecutors, police, and other relevant government stakeholders, and border police officers and social workers failed to properly identify unaccompanied migrant and refugee children as potential victims of human trafficking due to a lack of proper protocols. Furthermore, laws on the minimum age for work do not meet international standards because they do not apply to children who are self-employed or working outside of formal employment relationships.



I. PREVALENCE AND SECTORAL DISTRIBUTION OF CHILD LABOR

Children in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) engage in the worst forms of child labor, including in forced begging, sometimes as a result of human trafficking. Children also perform dangerous tasks in street work. (1,2) Table I provides key indicators on children's work and education in BiH. Data on some of these indicators are not available from the sources used in this report.

Table I. Statistics on Children's Work and Education

Children	Age	Percent
Working (% and population)	5 to 14	8.9 (44,017)
Attending School (%)	5 to 14	83.7
Combining Work and School (%)	7 to 14	10.6
Primary Completion Rate (%)		Unavailable

Primary completion rate was unavailable from UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2020. (3)

Source for all other data: International Labor Organization's analysis of statistics from Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 3, 2006. (4)

Based on a review of available information, Table 2 provides an overview of children's work by sector and activity.

Table 2. Overview of Children's Work by Sector and Activity

Sector/Industry	Activity
Services	Street work, including vending and washing car windows (5-7)
Categorical Worst Forms of Child Labor‡	Forced begging and forced domestic work, each sometimes as a result of human trafficking (1,5,10)
	Commercial sexual exploitation, sometimes as a result of human trafficking (1,5,10)
	Use in illicit activities, including for pickpocketing (5,7,10)
	Use in the production of pornography (2,7,10,11)

‡ Child labor understood as the worst forms of child labor per se under Article 3(a)–(c) of ILO C. 182.

Street begging is the most common form of child labor in BiH. (1,5,10) Organized groups sometimes traffic children to lucrative locations, both domestically and internationally, in regional and European Union countries, where they are forced to beg. (1,2,12,13)

Bosnia and Herzegovina

MODERATE ADVANCEMENT

Children in the largest minority group in BiH, the Roma, are vulnerable to the worst forms of child labor due to their difficulty in accessing education. The costs of school supplies and uniforms may be prohibitively expensive for some families. (5,7,14) Roma students also face discrimination from teachers, peers, and school administrators, which has resulted in a disproportionate number of Roma children being enrolled in schools for children with intellectual disabilities. (15) In addition, some Roma children lack birth registration documents, which are required to attend school in BiH. (5,10) Sources indicated that the government has not allocated enough financial resources for adequate implementation of inclusive education initiatives, particularly for students with disabilities. (1,2,5,10,16,17)




Schools in Republika Srpska (RS) deny the right for some Bosniak children to receive instruction in the Bosnian language, therefore these children sometimes travel long distances to the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (FBiH) to receive education in their language. (16-19) In addition, discrimination persists under the “Two Schools Under One Roof” practice between Bosniaks and Croats in FBiH. This practice creates obstacles for students who wish to attend schools other than those which match their ethnic identity and also enables ethnic discrimination in schools, which can lead to absenteeism. (18,20,21)

Children with disabilities generally face barriers to access education, which may make them vulnerable to child labor. Although the number of school programs for children with disabilities is increasing, parents of such children often receive little support from the government, and many schools are unable to provide accommodations for the children’s disabilities. (16)

II. LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR CHILD LABOR

BiH has ratified all key international conventions concerning child labor (Table 3).

Table 3. Ratification of International Conventions on Child Labor

	Convention	Ratification
	ILO C. 138, Minimum Age	✓
	ILO C. 182, Worst Forms of Child Labor	✓
	UN CRC	✓
	UN CRC Optional Protocol on Armed Conflict	✓
	UN CRC Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography	✓
	Palermo Protocol on Trafficking in Persons	✓

BiH is a democratic republic with a bicameral parliament. Governmental responsibilities lie with the state, the two entities of BiH (the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (FBiH) and Republika Srpska (RS)), and the self-governing Brčko District (BD). (16) The Government of BiH has established laws and regulations related to child labor, at the state, entity, and district levels (Table 4). However, gaps exist in BiH’s legal framework to adequately protect children from the worst forms of child labor, including the minimum age for work and the prohibition of military recruitment by non-state armed groups.

Table 4. Laws and Regulations on Child Labor

Standard	Related Entity	Meets International Standards	Age	Legislation
Minimum Age for Work	Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (FBiH)	No	15	Article 20 of the Labor Law of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (22)
	Republika Srpska (RS)	No	15	Articles 26–27 of the Labor Law of Republika Srpska (23)
	Brčko District (BD)	No	15	Article 10 of the Labor Law of Brčko District (24)
Minimum Age for Hazardous Work	FBiH	Yes	18	Article 57 of the Labor Law of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (22)
	RS	Yes	18	Articles 103 and 264 of the Labor Law of Republika Srpska (23)
	BD	Yes	18	Article 41 of the Labor Law of Brčko District (24)
Identification of Hazardous Occupations or Activities Prohibited for Children	FBiH	Yes		Articles 42, 57, and 171 of the Labor Law of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (22)
	RS	Yes		Articles 70, 72, 103, and 264 of the Labor Law of Republika Srpska (23)
	BD	Yes		Articles 28, 41, and 111 of the Labor Law of Brčko District (24)
Prohibition of Forced Labor	Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH)	Yes		Articles 185–186a of the Criminal Code of Bosnia and Herzegovina; Article 11 of the Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina (25,26)
	FBiH	No		Articles 210a (2–3) of the Criminal Code of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. (27)
	RS	Yes		Article 198b of the Criminal Code of Republika Srpska (28)
	BD	Yes		Article 207 of the Criminal Code of Brčko District (29)
Prohibition of Child Trafficking	BiH	Yes		Articles 185–186a of the Criminal Code of Bosnia and Herzegovina (26)
	FBiH	Yes		Articles 210a–210b of the Criminal Code of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (27)
	RS	Yes		Article 198b of the Criminal Code of Republika Srpska (28)
	BD	Yes		Article 207 of the Criminal Code of Brčko District (29)
Prohibition of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children	BiH	No		Articles 186 and 187 of the Criminal Code of Bosnia and Herzegovina (26)
	FBiH	No		Articles 210–211 of the Criminal Code of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (27)
	RS	No		Articles 198 and 198b–200 of the Criminal Code of Republika Srpska (28)
	BD	No		Articles 186 and 207–209 of the Criminal Code of Brčko District (29)
Prohibition of Using Children in Illicit Activities	BiH	No		Article 195 of the Criminal Code of Bosnia and Herzegovina (26)
	FBiH	Yes		Article 219 of the Criminal Code of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (27)
	RS	Yes		Articles 198b and 224 of the Criminal Code of Republika Srpska (28)
	BD	Yes		Article 216 of the Criminal Code of Brčko District (29)
Minimum Age for Voluntary State Military Recruitment	BiH, FBiH, RS, BD	Yes	18	Article 9 of the Law on the Service in the Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina (30)
Prohibition of Compulsory Recruitment of Children by (State) Military	BiH, FBiH, RS, BD	N/A*		Article 9 of the Law on the Service in the Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina (30)
Prohibition of Military Recruitment by Non-state Armed Groups	BiH, FBiH, RS, BD	No		Article 173(e) of the Criminal Code of Bosnia and Herzegovina (26)

Bosnia and Herzegovina

MODERATE ADVANCEMENT

Table 4. Laws and Regulations on Child Labor (Cont.)

Standard	Related Entity	Meets International Standards	Age	Legislation
Compulsory Education Age	FBiH	Yes	15‡	Article 16 of the Framework Law on Primary and Secondary Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina (31)
	RS	Yes	15	Article 2 of the Law on Primary Education of Republika Srpska; Article 16 of the Framework Law on Primary and Secondary Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina (31,32)
	BD	Yes	15	Article 55 of the Law on Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Brčko District; Article 16 of the Framework Law on Primary and Secondary Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina (31,33)
Free Public Education	FBiH, RS, BD	Yes		Article 16 of the Framework Law on Primary and Secondary Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina (31)

* No conscription (30)

‡ Age calculated based on available information (31)

The labor laws of FBiH, RS, and BD do not conform to international standards that require all children to be protected by the minimum age to work because the labor laws do not apply to children who are self-employed or working outside of formal employment relationships. Additionally, neither of the two entities nor the Brčko District includes begging in their lists of hazardous occupations prohibited for children. (13-15) The Criminal Code in BiH fails to prohibit using children for prostitution, for the production of pornography or for pornographic performances. Although the Criminal Code in FBiH criminalizes human trafficking for forced labor, it fails to specifically outlaw forced labor, debt bondage, and slavery separately from trafficking in persons. (5,27) The Criminal Codes in FBiH and in BD do not criminally prohibit the use of children for prostitution. While the Criminal Code in RS prohibits using children who are victims of human trafficking for prostitution, for the production of pornography and for pornographic performances, there is a gap in the law for children who are not trafficking victims. Additionally, laws related to illicit activities in BiH are not sufficient because using, procuring, and offering children for the production and trafficking of drugs is not criminally prohibited.

III. ENFORCEMENT OF LAWS ON CHILD LABOR

The government has established institutional mechanisms for the enforcement of laws and regulations on child labor (Table 5). However, gaps exist within the authority of the Ministries of Labor for FBiH, RS, and BD that may hinder adequate enforcement of their child labor laws.

Table 5. Agencies Responsible for Child Labor Law Enforcement

Organization/Agency	Related Entity	Role
FBiH Ministry of Labor and Social Policy Federal Inspection Agency and Cantonal-Level Labor Inspectorates	FBiH	Enforce labor laws, including those on child labor, in FBiH. (5,34)
RS Ministry of Labor and Veterans Labor Inspectorate	RS	Enforces labor laws, including those on child labor, in RS. (5,34)
BD Administrative Support Department	BD	Enforces labor laws, including those on child labor, in BD. (34)
Entity and Cantonal-Level Police	BD, FBiH, RS	Enforce criminal laws against human trafficking, forced labor, prostitution, and begging. (5)
Ministry of Security (MOS)	BiH	Enforces a national policy to prevent the worst forms of child labor and collects data on human trafficking. Ensures that victims are placed in government-approved shelters. (5)
State Investigative and Protection Agency (SIPA) and State Border Police (SBP)	BiH	Investigates human trafficking crimes and enforces anti-trafficking laws across the entire country (SIPA). Identifies victims of human trafficking at the border (SBP). (2)
State, Entity, and FBiH Cantonal-Level Prosecutors' Offices	BiH, BD, FBiH, RS	Prosecute human trafficking, forced labor, enticement to prostitution, and forced begging cases at their respective levels, based on applicable laws. (2)

Labor Law Enforcement

Research did not find information on whether labor law enforcement agencies in BiH took actions to combat child labor.

Table 6. Labor Law Enforcement Efforts Related to Child Labor

Overview of Labor Law Enforcement	Related Entity	2018	2019
Labor Inspectorate Funding	FBiH/RS/BD	Unknown (5)	Unknown
Number of Labor Inspectors	FBiH	83 (5)	Unknown
	RS	43 (5)	Unknown
	BD	7 (5)	Unknown
Inspectorate Authorized to Assess Penalties	FBiH/RS/BD	Yes (22-24)	Yes (22-24)
Initial Training for New Labor Inspectors	FBiH/RS/BD	No (5)	Unknown
Training on New Laws Related to Child Labor	FBiH/RS/BD	No (5)	Unknown
Refresher Courses Provided	FBiH/RS/BD	No (5)	Unknown
Number of Labor Inspections Conducted	FBiH/RS/BD	Unknown (5)	Unknown
Number Conducted at Worksite	FBiH/RS/BD	Unknown (5)	Unknown
Number of Child Labor Violations Found	FBiH/RS/BD	0 (5)	Unknown
Number of Child Labor Violations for Which Penalties Were Imposed	FBiH/RS/BD	0 (5)	Unknown
Number of Child Labor Penalties Imposed that Were Collected	FBiH/RS/BD	0 (5)	Unknown
Routine Inspections Conducted	FBiH/RS/BD	Yes (5)	Unknown
Routine Inspections Targeted	FBiH/RS/BD	Yes (5)	Unknown
Unannounced Inspections Permitted	FBiH/RS/BD	Yes (22-24)	Yes (22-24)
Unannounced Inspections Conducted	FBiH/RS/BD	Yes (5)	Unknown
Complaint Mechanism Exists	FBiH/RS/BD	Yes (5)	Unknown
Reciprocal Referral Mechanism Exists Between Labor Authorities and Social Services	FBiH/RS/BD	Yes (5)	Unknown

The government did not provide information on its labor law enforcement efforts for inclusion in this report, though officials in each entity reported that labor inspectors had sufficient resources to carry out inspections in 2019. However, no labor inspectors receive training on detecting hazardous child labor in agriculture, including handling agricultural chemicals. (5,35,36) Although complaint mechanisms exist in all entities, including a mechanism for receiving online complaints, research found that BiH does not have an official system for referring children identified during labor inspections to social service providers unless they are victims or potential victims of human trafficking. (5)

Criminal Law Enforcement

In 2019, criminal law enforcement agencies in BiH took actions to combat child labor (Table 7).

Table 7. Criminal Law Enforcement Efforts Related to Child Labor

Overview of Criminal Law Enforcement	Related Entity	2018	2019
Initial Training for New Criminal Investigators	BiH/FBiH/RS/BD	Yes (5)	Unknown
Training on New Laws Related to the Worst Forms of Child Labor	BiH/FBiH/RS/BD	Yes (5)	Unknown
Refresher Courses Provided	BiH/FBiH/RS/BD	Yes (5)	Yes (2)
Number of Investigations	BiH	Unknown (5)	Unknown
	FBiH/RS/BD	12 (36)	5 (37)
Number of Violations Found	BiH/FBiH/RS/BD	11 (36)	Unknown
Number of Prosecutions Initiated	BiH	Unknown (5)	3 (37)
	FBiH/RS/BD	7 (36)	Unknown
Number of Convictions	BiH	Unknown (5)	0 (37)
	FBiH/RS/BD	3 (36)	4 (37)
Imposed Penalties for Violations Related to The Worst Forms of Child Labor	BiH/FBiH/RS/BD	1 (36)	Unknown
Reciprocal Referral Mechanism Exists Between Criminal Authorities and Social Services	BiH/FBiH/RS/BD	Yes (5)	Yes (37)

Bosnia and Herzegovina

MODERATE ADVANCEMENT

As in previous years, forced begging cases are pursued by entity-level police and state-level prosecutors. (2,10) Children who are detained for begging are generally referred to social service providers, which are often run by NGOs with funding from the Ministry of Security or the Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees. (2,10,11) However, law enforcement officials sometimes penalize child victims of forced begging by issuing fines against the children. (2,38)

During the reporting period, the OSCE facilitated multiple trainings on indicators of trafficking in persons, with an emphasis on irregular migrants, including unaccompanied minors, for the Border Police and regional police forces. (2) However, research indicates that law enforcement officials and social workers would benefit from additional training on identifying children used for forced labor and begging, as these cases are often classified as child negligence or Roma custom instead. (2,10) Law enforcement personnel and prosecutors sometimes impose sentences under the legal minimum, decrease the severity of the sentences, or dismiss the charges against the perpetrators altogether. (2,5,10) In addition, enforcement officials are often unwilling to pursue investigations and prosecutions against parents involved in the trafficking of their children, particularly for forced labor, and the shelters subsequently return the children to the parents who trafficked them. (2,5)

The government did not provide information on its criminal law enforcement efforts for inclusion in this report.

IV. COORDINATION OF GOVERNMENT EFFORTS ON CHILD LABOR

The government has established mechanisms to coordinate its efforts to address child labor (Table 8). However, gaps exist that hinder the effective coordination of efforts to address child labor, including incorporation of all relevant agencies.

Table 8. Key Mechanisms to Coordinate Government Efforts on Child Labor

Coordinating Body	Role & Description
Department of the State Coordinator for Combating Trafficking in Persons (State Coordinator) within MOS	Coordinates human trafficking victim protection efforts among relevant ministries at the entity level and among prosecutors at the state, entity, and local levels, as well as with NGOs. (5,10,36,39) Oversees the human trafficking database, which includes data from NGOs, SIPA, SBP, and police agencies and prosecutors' offices at all levels. (10,36) Publishes data from this database in its annual report on human trafficking. (39) Oversees shelter management and monitors NGO compliance with the agreed-upon provisions on victims' assistance. (36) In 2019, the State Coordinator assisted 36 minors identified as potential victims of trafficking. (2)
Strike Force for Combating Trafficking in Persons and Organized Illegal Migration (Anti-Trafficking Strike Force)	Coordinates human trafficking investigations across government agencies. (36,39) Convenes monthly, with additional meetings scheduled as needed. (10,12,40) Chaired by the Chief State Prosecutor; includes BiH, FBiH, RS, and BD ministries and agencies. (2,5,39) In 2019, the Chief State Prosecutor reached out to more agencies in an effort to involve them in decision-making, including the BiH Border Police, and agreed to allot funding to be used to pay members a nominal participation fee. (2)
Inter-Ministerial Working Group	Monitors implementation of the National Strategy to Combat Trafficking in Persons and the National Referral Mechanism. (5,36,39) Comprises appointed representatives from the state and entity governments, including labor inspectors and elected representatives from NGOs. (5,8) During the reporting period, the Council of Ministers adopted the updated 2020-2023 National Strategy to Combat Trafficking in Persons and instructed both entity-level and cantonal governments to prepare and adopt action plans by June 2020. (2)
Regional Monitoring Teams	Facilitate anti-human trafficking coordination among state, entity, and cantonal-level institutions, as well as between NGOs and intergovernmental organizations. (39,41) Include labor inspectors. (38) In 2019, in an effort to decentralize operations and allow for more adept decision-making, agreed to expand from 4 teams to 18 teams. In addition, MOS organized trainings on protecting victims of trafficking for members of the regional monitoring teams, with an emphasis on the protection of unaccompanied minors and other vulnerable groups. (2,10)

Although the Strike Force is meant to coordinate anti-trafficking efforts across agencies, representatives from the Ministries of Labor are not included. (2,5) The BiH Prosecutor's Office assigned a new prosecutor to the Strike Force following the suspension of its former representatives; however, the FBiH Ministry of Interior failed to appoint its second member to the Strike Force. (37) In addition, the Strike Force lacked funding for a third consecutive year due to political disagreements and low levels of support across all levels of government. (2,10,36) The Strike Force also failed to consistently document its cases. (2,36)

The Council for Children did not meet during the reporting period due to a lack of funding for work and honoraria to members of the body. (37)

V. GOVERNMENT POLICIES ON CHILD LABOR

The government has established policies related to child labor (Table 9). However, policy gaps exist that hinder efforts to address child labor, including mainstreaming issues regarding the worst forms of child labor into relevant policies.

Table 9. Key Policies Related to Child Labor

Policy	Description
National Action Plan to Counter Trafficking (2016–2019)	Ensures a permanent, comprehensive, and sustainable response to trafficking in human beings through a strengthened system of prevention, prosecution of perpetrators, and protection and assistance to victims of trafficking. Called for additional harmonization of existing criminal legislation, following the recommendations of the Council of Europe and European Union. (5,7,37) During the reporting period, the National Coordinator organized meetings throughout 2019 with representatives from all levels of government, ensuring that the Strategy including its funding mechanism was drafted and approved by consensus by all levels of BiH government. (37)
Guidelines for Work of Regional Monitoring Teams	Enhances the cooperation of monitoring team members and the National Referral Mechanism. (10,44) Includes a section on mixed migration flows, in which unaccompanied migrant children and victims of human trafficking are addressed. (10) During the reporting period, the governments established six monitoring teams in Republika Srpska, one team in Brčko District, and three teams for Tuzla, Sarajevo, and Central Bosnia Canton; seven remaining teams in the Federation were in the initial establishment phase. (37)
Protocol on Cooperation and Treatment in Cases of Unlawful Behavior at the Detriment of Children in Canton Sarajevo	Prevents begging, exploitation of children, and abuse of children in Canton Sarajevo. (45,46) Sets rules on state cooperation on victim protection and mandates the provision of physical, psychological, health, and social protection for children. (46) During the reporting period, the signatories of the Protocol collaborated on its implementation which resulted in the identification of two potential victims of trafficking. Additionally, the body established a Steering Board to more successfully work on implementation of the Protocol. (37)

‡ The government had other policies that may have addressed child labor issues or had an impact on child labor. (47)

Although the Government of BiH has adopted the National Action Plan to Counter Trafficking, research found no evidence of a policy on other forms of child labor, including forced labor or illicit activities. (2,5,7) In addition, Roma organizations and government agencies have expressed intentions to develop an action plan to combat child begging; however, the plan has not been completed. (36)

VI. SOCIAL PROGRAMS TO ADDRESS CHILD LABOR

In 2019, the government funded and participated in programs that include the goal of eliminating or preventing child labor (Table 10). However, gaps exist in these social programs, including a lack of adequate funding.

Table 10. Key Social Programs to Address Child Labor

Program	Description
Registration Project	UNHCR-funded project, implemented by NGO <i>Vaša Prava</i> , which promotes the registration of Roma people to increase their access to social benefits and schools. (39) Has helped 1,740 individuals register for citizenship since 2009 and continues to provide legal assistance to foreign trafficking victims. (2,12,48) Active in 2019. (2)
Daily Centers‡	Center for Social Welfare-supported and NGO-operated drop-in centers in seven locations across the country for vulnerable children, especially street children. (5,10,12) Provides direct assistance for children, including educational activities, counseling, food, and hygiene. (49) Sarajevo's Center for Social Welfare's Mobile Team also engages in daily outreach to children on the streets and to families in vulnerable communities. In 2019, the Daily Centers provided social services to the 160 potential victims of child trafficking identified by the State Prosecutor, 14 of whom had previously received assistance from the centers. (2)
Assistance for Trafficking Victims‡	Government program that allocates small grants to local NGOs for the provision of shelter and social services to victims of human trafficking, including counseling, educational assistance and job training for domestic victims, and visa and legal services for foreign victims of human trafficking. (50) In 2019, MOS and the Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees allocated \$39,942 for shelters. (2)
UNICEF Country Program (2015–2019)	UNICEF-funded program that aimed to reduce child poverty, enhance child protection and inclusive education, and create inclusive early education for Roma children, as well as to identify gaps in access to education for Roma children and children with disabilities. (51) Research was unable to determine whether the program was active during the reporting period.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

MODERATE ADVANCEMENT

Table 10. Key Social Programs to Address Child Labor (Cont.)

Program	Description
Prevention and Fight Against Trafficking in Human Beings in Bosnia and Herzegovina*	Joint project by the European Union and the Council of Europe. Debuted in October 2019 and offers \$790,720 in funding over the course of 3 years to assist Bosnia and Herzegovina in its efforts to better identify victims of human trafficking and heighten public awareness of ongoing issues in the trafficking of persons. Plans to achieve goals through 12 trainings for labor inspectors, police officers, healthcare providers, and education professionals. (2)

* Program was launched during the reporting period.

† Program is funded by the Government of BiH.

Because labor inspectors do not have a mandate to inspect informal work, staff from Daily Centers are often the first to identify children engaged in hazardous street work. Sarajevo's Mobile Team staff continues to lack sufficient resources for their work, especially reliable transportation. (35,36,49) Although most Daily Centers collaborate with local Centers for Social Welfare, Daily Centers are not institutionalized and, therefore, lack consistent financial and technical support. (35,36,53) This may limit the ability of Daily Centers to identify and assist children working on the streets; additionally, government support for outreach to street children in areas outside Sarajevo varies significantly. Although the government provides some social services for low-income families through the Center for Social Welfare, many families do not receive enough assistance to reduce their reliance on child labor, especially begging. (35,36,49)

In previous years, many domestic victims of trafficking in persons have been left without assistance because unused funds allocated for human trafficking victims are returned to the state treasury. (2,10) However, the Ministry of Security and the Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees have indicated that this issue will likely resolve once funding for domestic and foreign victims is combined into one pool. During the reporting period, the government agreed that funding dedicated to assisting both domestic and foreign victims should be merged into one fund for disbursement by the National Coordinator's Office to ensure that the targeted populations would have access to a larger pool of resources. (2)

VII. SUGGESTED GOVERNMENT ACTIONS TO ELIMINATE CHILD LABOR

Based on the reporting above, suggested actions are identified that would advance the elimination of child labor in BiH (Table 11).

Table 11. Suggested Government Actions to Eliminate Child Labor

Area	Related Entity	Suggested Action	Year(s) Suggested
Legal Framework	BD, FBiH, RS	Ensure that the minimum age for work applies to all children, including those who are self-employed or working outside of formal employment relationships.	2015 – 2019
	FBiH	Criminalize forced labor, debt bondage, and slavery separately from human trafficking in FBiH's laws.	2018 – 2019
	BiH	Ensure that BiH law prohibits the use of children in illicit activities, including using, procuring, and offering children for the production and trafficking of drugs.	2015 – 2019
	BiH	Ensure that the BiH law criminally prohibits using children for prostitution, production of pornography or pornographic performances.	2019
	FBiH, BD	Ensure that the laws of FBiH and of BD criminally prohibit the use of children for prostitution.	2019
	RS	Ensure that the use of children in prostitution, production of pornography and for pornographic performances is criminally prohibited separately from human trafficking.	2019
	BiH, BD, FBiH, RS	Ensure that the laws criminally prohibit the recruitment of children under age 18 by non-state armed groups and that children are not punished for engagement in non-state armed groups.	2016 – 2019
	BD, FBiH, RS	Ensure that the hazardous occupations and activities prohibited for children are comprehensive and include sectors in which child labor is known to occur, including forced begging and use in illicit activities.	2016 – 2019

Table 11. Suggested Government Actions to Eliminate Child Labor (Cont.)

Area	Related Entity	Suggested Action	Year(s) Suggested
Enforcement	BD, FBiH, RS	Collect and publish information on labor and criminal law enforcement efforts, including labor inspectorate funding, number of inspections conducted, and number of prosecutions and convictions.	2015 – 2019
	BD, FBiH, RS	Ensure that labor inspectors receive training on all sectors in which child labor is known to occur, including hazardous work in agriculture.	2017 – 2019
	BiH, BD, FBiH, RS	Create an official mechanism for referring children identified during labor inspections to social service providers.	2018 – 2019
	BD, FBiH, RS	Ensure that children are not penalized for being victims of the worst forms of child labor.	2017 – 2019
	BiH, BD, FBiH, RS	Ensure that law enforcement, judiciary officials, and social service providers are trained on government protocols in detecting cases of child trafficking, including trafficking of migrant and refugee children, and are able to properly identify victims, classify violations, use referral mechanisms, and prosecute offenders according to the law.	2014 – 2019
Coordination	BiH, BD, FBiH, RS	Ensure that all relevant ministries are represented in the Anti-Trafficking Strike Force and allocate sufficient funding to enable coordination and documentation of active investigations.	2017 – 2019
	BiH	Ensure that all coordinating bodies are active and able to implement their mandates.	2019
Government Policies	BiH	Adopt a policy designed to address child labor and its worst forms, particularly forced labor and illicit activities, and include an action plan to address forced begging for the children of the Roma population.	2015 – 2019
Social Programs	BiH	Ensure that inclusive education initiatives receive adequate funding.	2009 – 2019
	BD, FBiH, RS	Ensure that all children have access to education by eliminating school-related fees, accommodating children with disabilities, and preventing discrimination of minority students.	2013 – 2019
	BD, FBiH, RS	Ensure that all children have access to birth registration or identity documentation required to enroll in school.	2011 – 2019
	FBiH, RS	Allow all Bosniak children in RS to access education in the Bosniak language and remove the “Two Schools Under One Roof” practice to eliminate discrimination in schools based on ethnicity in FBiH.	2018 – 2019
	BiH	Strengthen social protection measures by ensuring that programs such as the Daily Centers and Centers for Social Welfare receive adequate financial and technical resources to assist vulnerable families and victims of child labor.	2014 – 2019
	BiH, BD, FBiH, RS	Ensure sufficient resources to provide social services and education to potential and actual victims of domestic or international human trafficking, including unaccompanied minors.	2014 – 2019
	BiH	Ensure that the UNICEF Country Program and the UN Program and Common Budgetary Framework is active and completes its mandate.	2018 – 2019
	BiH	Ensure that government support for outreach to street children extends beyond Sarajevo.	2019

REFERENCES

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Bosnia and Herzegovina

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